

# Press Note

## JAPAN TO DEVELOP NEW LAUNCH VEHICLE TO COMPETE WITH U.S. SPACE SHUTTLE

Summary: Various Japanese news sources report that the Japanese Government Science and Technology Agency (STA) and the National Space Development Agency (NASDA) have decided to develop a large-scale launch vehicle, the H-1B, to compete with the U.S. space shuttle and ESA's Arienne launch vehicle. The U.S. and European systems are attractive to Japan's satellite users because of their operating economy and lift capability. STA and NASDA fear that use of these foreign launch vehicles could undermine development of Japan's independent space technology.

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According to SANKEI SHIMBUN of 4 June, the Science and Technology Agency (STA) and the National Space Development Agency (NASDA) have decided to develop a large scale follow-on to their H-1A launch vehicle. The follow-on, designated the H-1B, will be used to launch geostationary satellites on 1,000 kg by 1990. The decision of STA and NASDA was triggered by recent announcements made by an advisory organ to the Radio Regulatory Bureau of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications and by the Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Public Corporation (NTT). KAGAKU SHIMBUN of 2 April states that at the Utility Satellite Sectional Meeting of the Radio Utilization and Development Investigation Study Meeting, it was proposed that, as a cost-saving measure, the U.S. space shuttle should be used to launch the second generation broadcast satellite "BS-III" in 1988. KAGAKU SHIMBUN of 9 April, also reports that NTT Vice President Yasusada Kitahara stated that NTT is planning to use the U.S. shuttle to launch a 1-ton satellite "INSS-1" in 1988 and a 3-ton satellite "INSS-2" around 1995.

According to EKONOMISUTO of 18 May, STA and NASDA officials fear that possible use of the U.S. space shuttle could impede future development of an independent space technology that has just started to grow in Japan. The same source reports that STA and NASDA have clearly recognized the need for urgent expansion of Japan's space capability in the face of the very successful U.S. space shuttle and ESA's Arienne launch vehicle. Under Japan's current space program, according to various press sources, including NIKKAN KOGYO SHIMBUN of 18 March, the H-1A launch vehicle will be used to launch

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NTT's 550 kg communication satellite "CS-3" in 1988. The H-1B launch vehicle, if adopted, will be able to launch a 1,500 kg satellite, according to DEMPA SHIMBUN of 5 June.

The cost of developing the H-1B launch vehicle is estimated to be 100-150 billion yen according to DEMPA SHIMBUN of 5 June, or 300 billion yen according to NIKKAN KOGYO SHIMBUN of 9 June. Japan's total space development budget for FY-1982 was only 100 billion yen, however. Thus, NIKKAN KOGYO SHIMBUN of 9 June reports that STA and NASDA officials wholeheartedly welcomed the proposal of the Space Development Special Committee (Chairman Taro Nakayama) of the Liberal Democratic Party to increase the space budget from 100 billion yen to 300 billion yen and to accelerate development of large size satellites and launch vehicles.